



THE BRIEF

Fall 2014

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ZAB Holds First Major Planning Meeting for Super Bowl XLIX

While some initial planning meetings have been held so far this year to address the increased air traffic expected for Super Bowl XLIX next February, the planning meeting on September 9 involved the most stakeholders to date. During the meeting, a telcon was held with the FAA Command Center to discuss new departure routings as proposed by the ZAB airspace office and concurred by FAA Central Services Area Systems Operations and the Phoenix TRACON. ZAB looks to be well prepared for what will be a very busy period in and around Phoenix the last week of January into February 2nd.



Super Bowl XLIX planning meeting on 9/9/14. Pictured clockwise from lower left: Chris Kesler – STMC KPHX TRACON, Keith Alexander – Senior Advisor for System Operations, SW U.S. (Central Services Area), Leonie San Miguel - ZAB Traffic Management Officer, Jim Reynolds – ZAB CWSU Meteorologist in Charge, Rich Dodson – ZAB TMU Traffic Management Coordinator, and Travis Hatcher – NATCA rep for ZAB SW specialty. Not pictured: Matt Koester – NATCA rep for northwest specialty, Mike Hebert – Operational Manager (OM) for ZAB NW specialty, Larry Braaten – OM for ZAB SW specialty, Daniel Hess and Tom Golder – Front Line Managers (FLM) for ZAB NW specialty. Photo credit to Mike Kennedy – FLM for ZAB SW specialty.

NWS and FAA Work Together to Test New Products at the Aviation Weather Testbed Experiment

By Roger Smith, CWSU Meteorologist

National Weather Service (NWS) aviation meteorologists and researchers met with members of the FAA's Weather Evaluation Team (WET) August 11-15 to spend a week testing possible new aviation weather products at the Aviation Weather Center in Kansas City, MO. Each morning a group of more than 30 NWS meteorologists and researchers gathered in a large conference room equipped with 5 work stations dedicated to testing new aviation



Operational and research aviation meteorologists prepare experimental forecast products, while members of the FAA's Weather Evaluation Team observe the process.

weather products. If thunderstorms, low visibilities and low ceilings were affecting air traffic through the NAS on a particular day, then the testing would be conducted in a real-time environment. If the weather pattern on a given day was benign, then previous weather events were run on the computer work stations to simulate a real-time environment. The weather was active on Monday, Tuesday and Friday, August 11th, 12th and 15th, so on those days this was a live experiment. The FAA's WET members were able to give us immediate feedback on the utility of these new products on the days when the experiment was live, and this led to some excellent discussions and suggestions for improvement of products and communication.

The five experiments included the Collaborative Aviation Weather Statement (CAWS) to supplement the CCFP (Collaborative Convective Forecast Product). This statement would be issued in a 0-6 hour time frame to add forecast value to the CCFP forecasts or to provide vital information about thunderstorm activity prior to the 4-hour CCFP forecast. This special aviation statement would be targeted to areas in the NAS, where higher traffic volume was expected and higher impacts to aviation were likely. Meteorologists issuing the CAWS would have hourly air traffic flow maps to aid them in determining where to issue this product. Two of the experiments involved generating new graphics for ceiling and visibility, one for the continental U.S. and the other for the tropics from the western Atlantic and Caribbean to the Gulf of Mexico. Another experiment examined the potential of long-range thunderstorm forecasting, using new forecast products and tools. The fifth experiment involved the use of newly developed satellite products and algorithms to better predict initiation and development of thunderstorms.

At the end of each day, results and challenges of the experiments were presented by experiment leaders to the entire group of meteorologists and FAA attendees. There were interesting discussions at the end of each day, which were highly productive in identifying the potential value of these products to the FAA and how the products could be optimally communicated. It is not often that such a large group of operational and research meteorologists have an opportunity to interact with the FAA community in such an exciting and real-time experiment.

ZAB-U Wins FAA Award

By Art Humphreys, Integrated Safety Office

Albuquerque Center Safety University (ZAB-U), won the FAA Regional 2014 Wings of Success Award for Program Excellence.

Tammy Loveless, CPC SE and co-lead of the facility's all-volunteer Integrated Safety Office (ISO), accepted the award on behalf of ZAB at a ceremony in Ft. Worth (last week/August 27). It was her vision to create the in-house "university".

Along with Tammy, Robby Poole (E), Phil Spikes (E), Nick London (NW), and CNM professor Ted

Spitzmiller, an aviation and aerospace book and magazine author and editor, put "meat on the bones" of the curriculum and lesson plans for ZAB's homegrown in-house "institute of higher learning." The members of our Local Safety Council (aka the "SLM") approved and guided the curriculum, then supported development and delivery of the program.

Air Traffic Manager Terry Locke, in a facility-wide announcement said, "Hearty congratulations to our colleagues who envisioned, developed, and are delivering the ZAB-U curriculum, and to those in the Center who have taken advantage of this extraordinary opportunity to expand their knowledge and skills in the vital work we do for our nation."

Under Tammy's leadership, with the collaborative guidance of Albuquerque Center's Local Safety Council, the ISO team created and operates the ZAB-U as a supplementary education program for our air traffic professionals. The "university" provides ZAB personnel access to meaningful, advanced education in air traffic that leads to greater achievements in safety.

Tammy said, "Our motivation for creating this program is the potential for improving the average controller's knowledge base and exposing participants to potentially critical safety scenarios in the classroom environment or the Technical Training Lab (aka the "TTL") in order to better prepare them to handle similar situations on the floor. Participation in ZAB-U program is completely voluntary because it is our belief that every controller wants to do the best job that they can, and our program can help them achieve their own personal, safety-related goals."



Photo caption - Award Ceremony at the FAA Regional Headquarters in Fort Worth. L to R: SW Region Deputy Administrator Michael O'Harra, FAA Air Traffic Organization Central Service Area Sr. Advisor Todd Lowry, ZAB Integrated Safety Office (ISO) Co-Lead Tammy Loveless, ISO Management & Program Analyst Art Humphries, FAA HQ Air Traffic Organization Vice President for Mission Support Services Elizabeth Lynn Ray, and FAA SW Region Administrator Kelvin Solco.

ZAB-U has offered and completed two courses on aircraft related emergencies and has begun offering flight simulator time to the work force, with scheduling preference given to ZAB-U alumni. ZAB-U will be offering a course on sectional charts this month.

If there is a topic that you would like to see included in the ZAB-U curriculum contact any ISO advocate.

ZAB Raytheon Corner

By Rick Chavez, Contract Site Supervisor

Saying that we had a busy summer is an understatement. In addition to normal qualification training, we've been busy with qualification scenario redesign validation, STOPGAP lesson review/first course conduct, GIMS and RNAV work force training. GIMS, RNAV and redesign are still in progress.

The STOPGAP Program was an evaluation of the new academic classes for Stages 2 through 4. The new lessons contain extensive ERAM material and part task training to better prepare the students for lab and eventual OJT. The STOPGAP evaluation consisted of 2 separate sessions. The first session was a review of the new lessons. The second session was a first course conduct given to a Stage 4 class followed by an evaluation of the course presentation. The entire process was very beneficial and the new lessons are definitely an improvement.

The training schedule has been very busy. A Stage 3 lab completed on September 19 and a Stage 4 lab class just got started. In addition we have two Stage 2 Classes and one Stage 3 Class in progress with additional students in the pipeline.

In mid August we welcomed a new Casual Instructor. To most of you he is a familiar face, Mike McArthur. If you get a chance, come by and welcome him back. We are also onboarding another Casual Instructor in early October. Casual Instructors work on an as needed basis.

As you can see, training is getting busier by the day!



CWSU Albuquerque Social Media

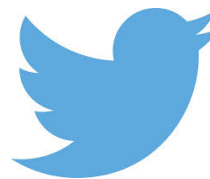
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Service Unit**



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Globe (QXY) ECOM Update

By Imani Jeffries, ZAB COMM Systems Support Center (SSC) Manager

Many people have been asking me for an update on the tower replacements for the QXY & QXYA RCAG facilities (these are the upper and lower RCAG sites on the mountain outside Globe, Arizona). The current status is that the project is fully funded. We are waiting on the USFS to give their stamp of approval to begin the project. They are currently back logged on their requests for project approvals and the project is expected to be approved this summer. It's anticipated that the project will begin sometime March, 2015.



Globe, AZ RCAG Site

We've come a long way with the Globe project. An AT-SAP report was filed in April 2012, which brought needed attention to the problems. It started off with noise on the frequencies during inclement weather and safety concerns in regards to the towers. Working toward solving these issues was a joint effort between the ZAB COMM SSC, Central Arizona SSC (Manager Mary Hart), and other representatives from both Central and Western Services Areas. These representatives were from Operations Engineering Support Group (OESG), Spectrum Engineering, Technical Services Operations Group (TSOG), Planning and Requirements (P&R), and ZAB ATC. These groups provided the knowledge and expertise beyond that held by the majority of my and the supporting SSC in Phoenix. To address the noise, Bandpass filters were installed along with some addition grounding work. The noise was first isolated to two distinct scenarios. One impacted all frequencies at the Upper Site, the second impacted only 135.15.

The engineers spent many days hunting the sources of this interference. As the interference was very intermittent, often time was spent simply waiting for an occurrence of the noise in strategic locations in Arizona. After a few months they were able to triangulate the 135.15 noise source to the White Tank Mountains west of Phoenix. In January 2013 the engineers, working with Luke AFB 56th Comm Squadron personnel, were able to isolate the source to an Air Force site and this noise issue was resolved. It took an additional 9 months to resolve the second issue as it only occurred with fairly substantial precipitation in the vicinity of the Globe RCAG's. The source was finally isolated to a decommissioned FM repeater antenna at the QXYA site itself in September 2013. Also, site diversity was established for all co-located BUEC's with the exception of 126.225. The 126.225 co-located BUEC is currently scheduled to be relocated to Mount Lemmon, Arizona. I've been told San Diego TSC will be utilizing their personnel to finish that installation.

Arrivals, Departures and Gate Changes

Arrivals (all from the academy):

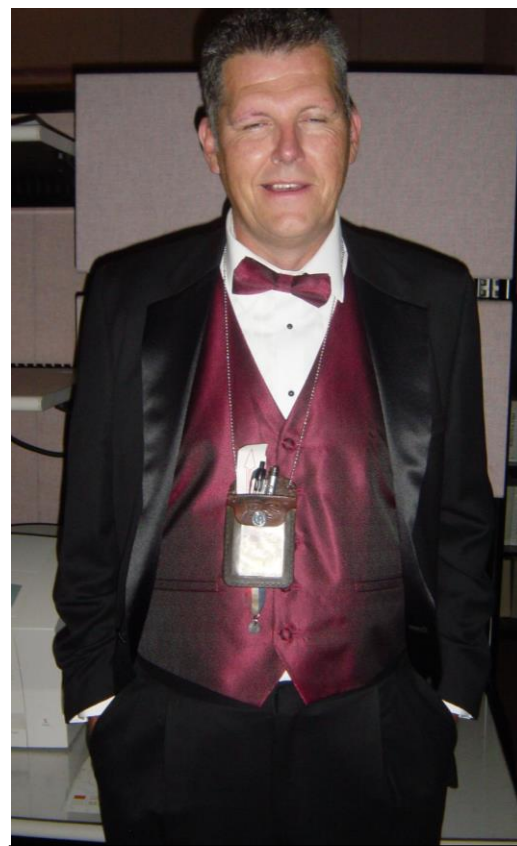
Adam Dickerson – 7/13/14
Ryan Miller – 7/13/14
Scott Hughes – 8/17/14
Nathaniel Black – 9/7/14
Alex Kreer – 9/7/14
William Martins – 9/7/14

Departures:

Dave Fredericks – CPC retired 6/28/14
James Swatek – CPC retired 6/28/14
Richard Adams – CPC retired 7/26/14
Phillip Chappell – CPC retired 7/31/14
Brett Thompson – CPC resigned 8/9/14

Gate Changes:

Greg Rhodes – CPC to Anchorage TRACON (A11)
6/29/14
Steve Hansen – CPC to Washington ARTCC (ZDC)
7/13/14
Arthur Hughes – CPC-IT to Albuquerque Tower (ABQ)
7/13/14
Clay Coleman – CPC to Oakland ARTCC (ZOA)
7/27/14
Dino Hall – Support Mgr to Chicago ARTCC (ZAU)
8/24/14
Walter Russell – TMC to Fort Worth ARTCC (ZFW)
9/7/14
Nancy Thompson – CPC to Kansas City ARTCC (ZKC)
9/7/14



Phil Chappell went out in style on his last day at ZAB